

december | january 2013/14

# sonningcommon

magazine



## THE RUBY EDITION

40TH ANNIVERSARY  
PULL-OUT INSIDE

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sonningcommon  
magazine

# From the editorial group

The 40th anniversary edition of the magazine is a testament to the people over all those years who have invested so much time, effort and energy into its production. It has maintained a community news focus and contributes considerably to the view that so many people frequently mention, 'Sonning Common is a friendly and attractive place to live.'

Ruth Hodgson, who was the first editor of the magazine, stated "we intend the magazine to be self- supporting through advertising, non-political and non- sectarian (in its content). It will be distributed free, every two months, to each house in Sonning Common." This first funding came from the Parish council who continue to support the magazine. Her editorial comment in December 1973 set the context for the ensuing 40 years and is broadly the direction in which it has continued. The changes since the early days provide the focus for the articles in the anniversary section of this edition. Both then and now it is a fact that the magazine has been supported by a vast number of willing people who give, generously, their time. From the Magazine Committee to the editorial team, the distribution manager and her team of deliverers and without all of their support it would not be possible to achieve the aims as set out by Ruth.

The first article on the first page, began with this quote. "In the past 20 years Sonning Common has changed from a quiet village of about 1,000 inhabitants to a busy community of 4,000 people". Concerns were expressed at that time about the lack of community spirit and it was written that "a sense of community can only come from the people who live here, old and new."

Although the expansion, in population and housing, we expect to take place over the next few years is not on the same scale, the author of this original comment would be pleased to know that there is a good community feel about our local environment. Let us hope this will continue, the newcomers will be made to feel welcome and the magazine will continue to play its part in maintaining the community ethos.

Many of our regular pages do not appear in this special edition, but the community news continues to provide an update, especially the congratulations due to the Village Gardeners for their award.

The final wish for this anniversary edition remains as it has been in every December edition of the magazine. To all our readers, Best wishes for a Happy Christmas and a Healthy 2014.

*Diana*

**DIANA PEARMAN** Editor

Email: [editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org](mailto:editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org)

PS...

Sonning Common Magazine is on sale at the village library in Grove Road for £1.50 a copy. Annual subscriptions are available for £15. Contact Geoffrey Adams. Email: [chairman@sonningcommonmagazine.org](mailto:chairman@sonningcommonmagazine.org) Phone: 0118 972 2134

Magazine contributions may be posted to:  
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WHILE EVERY EFFORT IS MADE TO ENSURE THE ACCURACY OF INFORMATION PRINTED IN THIS MAGAZINE, THE EDITOR AND THE PUBLISHER CANNOT ACCEPT ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF ERRORS THAT OCCUR.

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COPY DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE 01 JANUARY 2014





## Outstanding is the verdict on our village flower beds

The Village Gardeners were delighted to receive an award of "outstanding" at the Royal Horticultural Society's annual award ceremony held at St Mary Butts on 18 September.

It was the first time that we had entered the competition, so we had no idea what to expect but our visiting judge Ben Stanesby had been complimentary when Jill Greenwood and I showed him round the village. He then sent a report "I congratulate the Village Gardeners on what they have achieved and believe that an entry into the main Britain in Bloom competition is an obvious next step".

### What do you think?

Despite the very wet weather, warm and generous praise was heaped upon the work done by The Village Gardeners in Sonning Common by people questioned by **Hannah Rice** and **Joan Grumman**.

One new resident Debbie Fleming, of the new bakery 'Flemings' in Wood Lane, thought the village a 'very welcoming place' and said that as a person who had always lived in towns 'it is a lovely thing that people give up their time to improve their environment'.

Another resident Margaret Priest said that 'a great improvement had been made' and 'it makes you proud to live here'. She also commented on how different it looked and particularly liked the wheelbarrow arrangements.

Sonya Forbes who has lived in Sonning Common since she was eight, was with her mother Linda Wright and both thought the phone box was an 'unusual' and had noticed the new benches outside the village hall.

Jojo Groux from the Off License felt the front of the property looked much clearer and neat and that 'The Village Gardeners had done a very good job'.

Two very fit walkers were not sure about the phone box but felt the village was 'brighter on gloomy days' and that volunteers were 'marvellous'.

Here are some of the other comments made by people passing by -

*"Very nice - very pretty. Lots of work has gone into it"*

*"Looks brighter-so much better -an improvement"*

*"Brilliant work by volunteers"*

*"The younger generation seem to appreciate what is being done - less vandalism"*

*"Fabulous -love the bit outside the Village Hall"*

*"Vandalism has gone down a lot"* ■



## Town twinning - our visit to Evreux

Fun, laughter, and bonhomie were the order of the day when the Sonning Common Twinning Group set off for France for the weekend at the end of September. 16 people including 2 young families were wined, dined and entertained by families in the villages of Guichainville and St Luc in northern France.

Our arrival on Friday night was heralded with local fare and wine, followed on the Saturday with exploratory walks round the area, taking in markets and the beautiful historic nearby town of Evreux, where local actors brought the experience alive. A visit to the local Roman settlement of Gisacum and the local Salle des Associations for a quiz,

dancing and a lot of laughter ended a very enjoyable day.

Organiser Jo Quinton said: "We were delighted by the success of the trip. With the enthusiasm of the participants concerned, I'm sure this will turn out to be a long-term venture."

If you are interested in taking part in the twinning programme, contact

Jo: [joquinton@gmail.com](mailto:joquinton@gmail.com) ■



## All4one - The Imbumba Foundation Taking sports and health education to the African community

On the 12 October the many musical talents of Sonning Common got together to support village resident Lee Williams in a fundraising evening at Rotherfield Greys hall. Lee supports All4One 2013 - a charity in the first stage of a three year project with the aim of engaging with youth to improve essential HIV/AIDS and TB awareness and action through sport.

Lee thanks everyone who helped - all the musicians, Oli Rees for the sound, Sarah Sayer for the great food, and a special thanks to Paul Gudge for working very hard with him organising the event.

A grand total of £2000 has been raised from the evening which will go towards the £100,000 that is the All4One target.

Lee is going to South Africa very soon, along with other groups, to help with the building of a new health centre, establishing health education and training staff for the centre. Football and netball pitches will also be built as part of the project and the England Netball team is joining them to encourage the girls to join in the national netball league. ■

[www.all4oneuk.org/imbumba-foundation.php](http://www.all4oneuk.org/imbumba-foundation.php)

[www.justgiving.com/Lee-Williams21](http://www.justgiving.com/Lee-Williams21)

[www.imbumbafoundation.org](http://www.imbumbafoundation.org)



## Club SC news

### 6 weeks of music

Readipop is starting 6 weeks of music sessions this week, which will include a Ukelele Orchestra, Music Technology and Build a Band. We have teamed up with Readipop to start this new exciting venture providing musical opportunities.

### New Ultimate Frisbee Youth Club Team at Club SC

Ultimate Frisbee is a high speed team game where the aim is to gain possession of the disc in an end zone by throwing it to receivers.

Club SC enjoyed an exhilarating day out paintballing courtesy of two local businesses, The Bay Trees Tea Shop and John Davey Joinery who kindly sponsored 20 youngsters to go on the trip. Young people learnt important team work and communication skills whilst having much fun running around Mapledurham Estate dressed in camouflage and armed with 150 paintballs each.

Please help - funds to buy a new sound system and to go on another trip in the spring. Email [beckyclubsc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:beckyclubsc@hotmail.co.uk)

### Chairman elected

Carol Viney was elected Chairman of Club SC Management Committee at their AGM on Wednesday 9 October. ■

## RUFC Ball raises £7,000 for new clubhouse

In keeping with the magazine, Rotherfield United FC also celebrates a 40th anniversary this year. One of the celebrations was a fundraising ball in the lovely setting of Shiplake College Grand Hall on Saturday 25 October.

This was the second ball organised by the club and over 90 parent members had a great evening with games and an auction run by Lee Williams and Paul Gudge, who proved again to be able to separate large sums of money from people!

The club chairman, Andy Davies, is stepping down after four years of huge contribution to the club. He was presented with special service medals for his efforts, moving RUFC to a new ground and, hopefully, a new clubhouse! ■





# Terrifyingly inspirational...



**Steve McGrath has recently taken over as Chair of Governors at Sonning Common Primary School from Jackie Million who has been in the driving seat for the last six years. Steve asked Jackie for some advice...**

I'm not sure if a chat with Jackie Million, my predecessor as chair of governors at Sonning Common Primary School, left me feeling inspired or terrified. Probably a bit of both.

Jackie has been a fixture at the school, on and off, for the past thirty years, first as a teacher in the eighties, then as a governor on her retirement in 2004 and latterly as chair of governors for the past six years, so the knowledge and experience she has built up could be seen as a little daunting.

"I've always loved the school as it has so much to offer," says Jackie. "It's consistently exciting and challenging, has a dedicated staff who rise to any challenge and there's always a lot going on." **Inspirational.**

"The governors are fantastic too," she adds, "and have tried to move with the recent changes. But I do think it's now a huge and challenging role, and not what a group of volunteers from a few years ago would have even considered looking at." **Terrifying.**

Jackie has worked in seven different schools in her more than 35 years of teaching and school headships, so I'm relieved at least that she will be staying on to lend her support and advice as chair of the curriculum committee, a hugely important role.

"I'm really looking forward to being part of the team and focusing on the areas that I can get my teeth into. There have been many, many highlights in my time here, and I will always have a special affection for the school."

As for what's next, there will certainly be no taking it easy. A member of the South Chiltern Choral Society, she is looking forward to doing more singing, as well as returning to one of her first loves, history. Of course she'll also be spending more time with her real love, her husband of 45 years Geoff, along with her two daughters Esther (whose eldest daughter has just started at the school) and the Devon-based Lucy.

Jackie's final year as chair coincided with the school's hugely successful centenary celebrations, and there are plenty of challenges to come as the next hundred years starts. "The school is lucky to have such a committed group of governors, and I'm sure it will continue to go from strength to strength." And any words of advice? "Jolly good luck!" says Jackie, with a wry smile.

**Terrifyingly inspirational!**

## Separated families - getting it right for children at Christmas

Christmas is a time for families but for many separated families it resurrects the sense of loss of the "perfect family" that is no longer.

Single parents work hard all year at parenting apart but one event that can somehow create the most angst is ... Who gets to have the kids Christmas Day!

**Look up their good advice**

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# Neighbourhood Development Plan 7th public meeting in consultation series

On Friday 11 October the NDP team hosted an evening presentation in the Village Hall, to an audience of 52 residents, landowners and various parish and district councillors. John Howell, Conservative MP for Henley also attended.

This meeting, the seventh in the series of consultations with villagers since April 2012, focussed on three important topics Traffic & Parking (Craig Henderson), Character of Sonning Common village (Jeff Bishop – Consultant to the NDP) and, thirdly, the Options selected by residents for the location of future homes and associated facilities (Leigh Rawlins).

Following the meeting 41 attendees gave written responses to a questionnaire which included traffic and parking and street lighting. The majority suggested that parking and traffic issues warranted further attention and investment, while existing street lighting was deemed to be

sufficient with many expressing concerns that increased lighting would detract from the rural character of the village.

The questionnaire also asked for views on:

- a) The proposed spread of development between locations in the North and South of the village - (27 agreed, 10 disagreed, 4 undecided);
- b) The proposal of 'simple grassed Amenity Green space', possibly on SON 1 (opposite Old Copse Wood) - (30 agreed, 5 disagreed, 6 undecided);
- c) The proposal of a sports field with pitches and scope for a new Community/Sports Hall, possibly located on SON 3 (Memorial Hall field opposite Chiltern Edge School) – 22 agreed, 15 disagreed, 4 undecided).

On 16 November, 150 residents attended another public meeting which was held at the village hall. The display board 'walk through' presentation told the 'story so far'.



## Police appeal

Sonning Common's Police Community Support Officer, Colin Boyes, is appealing to people to park considerately, taking into account their neighbours' rights of access to their properties.

He said: "Tensions have been rising recently among residents and I am often called in to examine disputes over parking. Many problems could be avoided if neighbours parked considerately and spoke directly with one another over any issues of concern."

## The way we were...



A view of the 40th anniversary of the magazine, as illustrated by Ian Troup. Enjoy the Ruby edition pullout section on page 11



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**7PM TO 9PM**

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support Lions charitable projects  
Every pound donated goes to  
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Celebrating 40 years of  
sonningcommon  
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THE RUBY  
EDITION

## An exhibition to celebrate

### 40 years of the Sonning Common magazine

**30 November to 14 December**  
**in the library**

Library opening hours: Monday 2pm - 5pm  
Tuesday closed / Wednesday 2pm - 7pm  
Thursday and Friday 9am - 1pm and 2pm - 5pm  
Saturday 9.30am - 12.30pm

INTERNATIONAL UKELELE CLUB OF SONNING COMMON

## Christmas Concert

**7 December 2013 from 7pm**  
**Shiplake Memorial Hall**

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## Community Governor

The Governing Body at Chiltern Edge School in Sonning Common is looking for a community governor without any immediate connection to the school.

No existing experience is necessary just a passion for education and welfare of the children. We need someone with a real commitment to help develop our local school so we can achieve our ambition to become an outstanding school whilst enhancing and adding value to our existing Board of Governors. If you would like to know more about the role please email the Clerk to the Governors Leena Wisely [onlywisely@chilternedge.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:onlywisely@chilternedge.oxon.sch.uk) or call the school on **01189721500**.

Chiltern Edge School

Competition! Competition! Competition!

## Design the village sign

The Sonning Common Society's competition is for a Village Sign (similar to a pub sign)

The Village Sign should include its name and some of its local features, such as trees, Kites, the pond .....

Designs to be A4 or larger

Entries with your name and contact details to:

Mark Richards 2 Lambourne Road,  
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[mark.richards62@btinternet.com](mailto:mark.richards62@btinternet.com)

Open to EVERYONE - closing date 31 March 2014

Entries will be displayed in the Village Hall and there will be a prize of £20 for the winner.

### PLEASE SUPPORT THIS VENTURE BY ENTERING A DESIGN!!!

## Sonning Common and District Art Club?

It is something our village doesn't have...

For everyone, whatever their level of talent

Motivate yourself even if you are a total beginner

People can learn from one another

A club would be a medium to reveal and display local talent with exhibitions and competitions and perhaps to raise funds for local good causes

Day and/or Evening? Not just watercolour? Perhaps not just painting and drawing?

Interested call Alan Goswell **0118 972 2989**

## FESTIVE FUN AT THE CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

**at Sonning Common Village Hall**

People on their own and couples who find the seasonal shopping all too much are welcome

Tickets are **£12** each and available from Occasions

## How about a New Year's resolution to take up lawn bowling?

Peppard Bowls meet behind the Memorial Hall on Gallowstree Road  
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Contact Jenny, Membership Secretary on 0118 924 2617

## SONNING COMMON SHORT MAT BOWLS

For an evening of fun and enjoyment  
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**Village Hall Wednesdays - 8pm**

## Library Christmas & New Year closing

**Monday 23rd December** closes 5pm  
**Thursday 2nd January 2014** opens 9am

The library staff wish everyone a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year



## VILLAGE COFFEE MORNINGS

\*\*\*\*\*

**Sonning Common Village Hall**  
**WEDNESDAY 4 DECEMBER 2013**  
**10.30am - 12pm**

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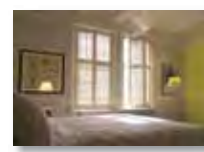
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# EDITORS OVER 40 years



## Jill Kendal – 1990 to 2003

Jill is Sonning Common Magazine's longest serving editor. She and her family moved to Sonning Common in 1975. Her husband had a new job in Beaconsfield and chose Oxfordshire as they wanted their three daughters educated in a comprehensive system. Jill taught at Sonning Common Primary from 1972 to 1994, working her way through the year groups from Years 1 to Year 6.

Recalling how she became editor of Sonning Common Magazine, Jill says: "I had my arm twisted by the then chairman." She took on the role despite already being heavily involved with village life, as chair of Adult Education, a member of Chiltern Players and as a coach for the local hockey club.

Jill remembers having to retype most of the information that was contributed. When she was editor, for the first time copy was emailed to the then printer/publisher, Cahill of Caversham. She reflects: "It always seemed to be done in a rush and we could not send photos. The covers were stencils, often repeated on several editions and it was printed in black and white as we couldn't afford coloured copies." An exception was made in 2000, to celebrate the millennium with colour on the covers.

She feels the adverts are very important and help local tradespeople. During her editorship the adverts were fixed for one year and formed half of the magazine, the other half being editorial. Jill assigned the pages and the designer changed the font. "It was not a sophisticated process," she comments. "What I like about the current magazine is the community news, the noticeboard information and the Parish Council page as it is now such an active council, which is making a real difference to the village. ■

## Natalie Ruiz-Moreno – 2003 to 2009

Natalie, the second longest serving editor, took over from Jill and says: "It was a hard role to fill." However she enjoyed being editor although it was a labour intensive task, as she received mostly written or copied material for inclusion. She did write bits and piece, took the magazine from black and white to colour and



introduced photography. She also had some regular contributors. In her time there was quite a strong committee influence and she now thinks the editor role is a bit more independent. Natalie was born and grew up in the village, attended the primary school and Chiltern Edge before going on to university. She now works as a Business Development and Marketing Manager for the accountancy firm Grant Thornton UK and lives in Winnersh.

When she visits her Mum and Dad in Sonning Common she always tries to read the current magazine and says: "It is great to see how well the magazine has evolved and its production using a professional creative agency, gives it a good edge especially the use of photography to enhance stories." ■



## Ros Varnes – 2009 to 2011

Ros came to live in the village from Sussex some seven years ago, with her husband (a pilot based at Heathrow) and their two small children. Having been made to feel so welcome, Ros decided that she wanted to make a contribution to the community.

Ros' background as a trained journalist, with experience of developing magazines, gave her some ideas for improving Sonning Common Magazine. After a few prompts from family and friends, Ros suggested she might be interested in the editor's role, which had become vacant. In a meeting with the committee Ros outlined how she would like to redesign and re-launch the magazine. Fortunately for the village, the committee liked her ideas and gave her the job.

Many of the changes were structural, including the introduction of defined sections such as In Focus, Community News and the Noticeboard. Tom Fort's popular column was also introduced while a contents' page was added to make the magazine more easily navigable.

Ros' intention was to make the magazine, "much more community focussed, to ensure everyone knew what was going on and to conduct interviews with local people for flavour and colour. This new bright and

attractive magazine signalled another change in its long history.

Of the anniversary of the magazine's inception, Ros says: "I have great respect and admiration for anyone who has volunteered to help with the magazine. To have kept it going for over 40 years and enabled its steady evolution is a tribute to all of those many, many people". ■



are newcomers to the village, having only lived here for four years, so have limited knowledge of the village activities.

Sonning Common is our seventh home and by far the best move for us. This area was chosen as we have many friends and family within close proximity and were attracted by the services and facilities in the village. Coincidentally when the magazine was 'born' we were living not far away in Earley, Reading.

John is the advertising manager for the magazine and has been since 2010. This husband and wife team of advertising manager/editor has occurred twice in the 40-year history of the magazine, in the 80s with Graham and Brenda Damp and now with us. ■

## Brenda Damp – 1982 to 1983

Brenda and Graham Damp moved from Peppard to Sonning Common in 1960 and lived in the village for nearly 40 years. Because of ill health Graham had to retire from his post as an Assistant Director of the Post Office at the age of 50.

They were both involved with the magazine from early days and Brenda recalls: "It was printed on the Roneo machine by Graham and Mr. North. I helped with the typing of the stencils and we and a lot of other villagers helped to assemble the pages and staple them together under the direction of Petra North. It took a lot of time and effort!" ■

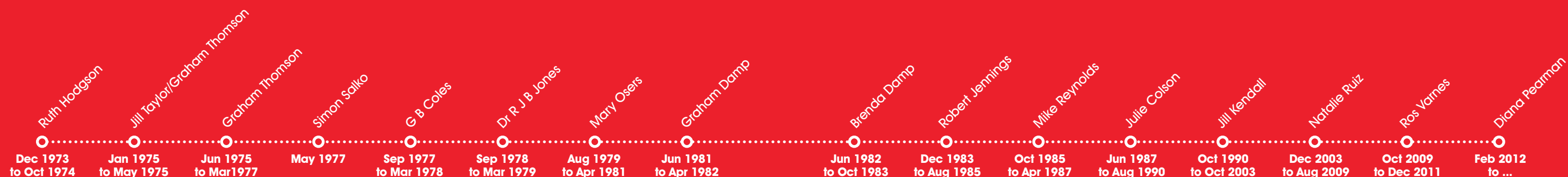


## Diana Pearman – 2012 to ...

As the current editor, I have the good fortune to be the one in post on its 40th anniversary. I inherited the easiest job of any editor since 1973. Ros had set up the templates for each page with our graphic designer Kevin Taplin and communication now is entirely via email.

The editorial team, which started when Ros was editor, has been extended and makes an enormous contribution to the variety of the copy in the magazine. Their range of ages and interests means that we are able to harness information from all aspects of village life.

This last point is crucially important on two counts. The first is that we now have slightly fewer advertising pages, which means that we are able to produce more editorial. This has been well received by readers and does appear to encourage further contributions. The second point is that my husband John and I







# SOME THINGS *never change*

By ROS VARNES

*Sonning Common Magazine may be 40-years-old this month and the village may be 40 years older than it was at the launch of the magazine but some of the issues that were concerning residents in the past are still bothering them today. Indiscriminate parking, particularly at junctions, dog poo, traffic problems... We're still suffering!*

*Here we look back at some of the issues of the past to find that they are still present today. Perhaps the future will bring a change.*

## PARKING

**Letter from William Gittings, Sonning Common Parish Council general purposes committee, in the February 1993 edition.**

### Parking - please help

The parish council have received a number of protests about indiscriminate parking of vehicles right on the corner of Wood Lane and Woodlands Road by people shopping at Gateway supermarket. And the problem has increased since the extended opening hours of the shop.

The majority of sensible motorists in the area can see the obvious dangers to pedestrians and traffic at this busy corner.

However, there are a minority of inconsiderate vehicle owners who carry on this law-breaking practice every week, and ignore the Highway Code rules on parking at junctions.

Although essentially a local police matter, we are appealing for a common sense approach by all drivers on this issue before there is an accident which we will all regret.

Surely walking a few dozen extra yards is no real hardship and a small price to pay for the safety of fellow residents of this parish.

**Thank you.**

**Response from Francis M Andrews in the following edition (April 1993).**

I welcome the letter from William Gittings in your February issue, and I hope that this letter will be effective in improving the present bad habits of parking at the Wood Lane/Woodlands Road junction.

Could I draw your attention to the equally serious problem of parking at the junction of Sedgewell Road with the busy B481, the Peppard Road? It has become common for drivers to park on each side of Sedgewell Road - a practice which itself produces difficulties - but also it is now common for cars and vans to stop in the Peppard Road so that the line-of-sight for those seeking to join or leave the road is obstructed.

Since, despite the 30mph limit, traffic moves very quickly on the B481, and since there is an increase of traffic density in that road, inconsiderate parking at this junction must greatly increase the risk of accidents.



## DOG FOULING

**Note from the parish council, June 1993 edition.**

The parish council has received a letter of complaint from the health centre about the problem of dogs fouling the footway in Sibella Way. This is a long-standing problem in certain parts of our village. The parish council can provide a free issue of poop scoopers, which are available from the clerk at the village hall office on Monday mornings. Please make use of this service. We hope the contents of the letter below, coming from the medical profession, will deter dog owner offenders and that common sense will prevail and this on-going problem can be resolved.

**Letter from Dr Andrew Burnett, Sonning Common Health Centre, 11 March 1993.**

### Dog fouling in Sibella Way

I have been concerned to notice over the last few weeks the amount of dog fouling in Sibella Way. Almost every day there is a new patch of dog mess.

The path is used by children and their parents on their way to and from school and while I am sure it is only one or two inconsiderate dog owners who are the cause of the problem, I wonder if the parish council would consider erecting notices at either end of Sibella Way reminding dog owners of their obligations.

From the medical point of view, dog faeces carry a number of transmissible

diseases, the most notable of which, Toxocara, causes several hundred cases of eye damage in the UK each year. From the social point of view, dog mess on shoes is simply unpleasant.

**Extract from parish council notes, December 1983 edition.**

A further item was raised by Major Bush who stated that, despite there being a bye-law relating to the fouling of footpaths by dogs, which had been mentioned in the village magazine in its last publication, the problem was getting worse and he was getting constant complaints. [Aside from the writer]: (Possible coincidence but 48 hours later I was myself clearing dog excreta from outside my own front gate!!)

**Letter from the trustees of SCOMIT, who administer the Millennium Green, April 2003 edition.**

The trustees of SCOMIT, who administer Kennylands Millennium Green, are fed up with dog owners who do not clear up after their dogs. They have put up polite notices saying that dogs' mess offends other people, but the nuisance has continued.

A box containing 'Whoops!' bags and plastic bags has been installed at the main entrance to the Green. If you do not already pick up your dog's mess you may use these bags to do so.

If you feel unable to clear up your dog's mess would you please not use the field. Clean up or stay away!



## FACILITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

**Letter from Bob Holcombe, December 1983 edition.**

In recent months great interest has been shown by young people regarding the possibility of establishing a BMX track in Sonning Common.

An enquiry has been made of the Bishopswood Recreational Trust to ascertain if enough space would be available there. If suitable ground was available I anticipate that a working party would be formed to plan and execute the necessary work.

The matter has been discussed with the parish council and it is hoped that their support will be forthcoming.

**Notice in the April 2003 edition.**

### Who's for skateboarding?

There is the possibility of a skateboarding ramp being constructed on the unused area of scrub and dead elm trees at the lower edge of Bishopswood recreation ground. It will be accessible from Woodlands Road and footpath no.5.

Green Gym members are clearing the site at present and it is hoped that with the approval of the parish council and practical help from volunteers, young and old, including those with construction skills, a safe ramp could be produced.

Already some teenagers from Chiltern Edge Youth Club have volunteered.

(Forty years down the line and we might be closer to realising that dream with the current, concerted efforts by the parish council and community to build a skatepark at Bishopswood). ■





## FROM GESTETNER TO

## desktop publishing

By CHRISTINE ATKINSON

*We wanted to produce a really special part in the 40th anniversary magazine to celebrate how much the magazine has changed since it first started. Numerous editors have changed and redesigned the way it is presented, and over 40 years the whole world of printing and publication of printed matter has changed dramatically. From the huge broadsheets that were first produced in the world of newspapers, lots of us are now reading digital versions on computers, tablets and phones – making news very transportable.*



Our own Sonning Common magazine has also come a long way from its beginnings being produced in the hall at the back of Kidmore End church. It is now in glorious colour on lovely shiny paper and the whole thing is sent to the printing company through the airwaves via the magic of the internet!

Technology and printing can be a really boring subject to read about, so I have tried to make it a little lighter!



Back in 1973 there was no village hall nor any photocopiers as we know them today. The 'team' borrowed an old small Gestetner duplicator, which was a forerunner to the photocopier, and hired the hall behind Kidmore End Church to produce the first magazine. They had managed to get £50 from the parish council to buy paper, ink, staplers and other requisites. Roy Cheeseman did a drawing of Widmore Pond which was used as the front cover.

Each page was laid out, adverts completed and then retyped onto stencils which were wrapped around a drum. The

paper was then fed through against the drum, and ink forced onto the paper. It was a very long and messy process! On Sunday morning, 9am, 1st December 1973, John Goodwin and Tony Compton went to the hall with all the equipment ready to print. They loaded the paper in the machine and turned it on. The drum went spinning round and round, and...blank paper came out!...they had forgotten to put the ink in!

By 1pm they had printed the front cover! They were learning by trial and error how to manage the machine, but it took TWELVE DAYS to finish printing! The next day was spent cleaning the spilt and splattered ink from the walls and floor of the church hall. There followed another three days of collating and stapling 15000 pages into 1500 copies to distribute.

We have moved on incrementally from those first copies. In 2000 all 6 special millennium copies had colour on the front covers, and in 2006 the first full colour copies were produced. Strangely we found no mention of this historic event within that first colour copy – you would have thought it would have been worth a mention!

Now, in 2013, 40 years on, the magazine articles are produced on computers, sent to the editor via email and transferred to the designer on a magic memory stick. The designer compiles the magazine, forwards it all to the printer and it is delivered back in boxes. No ink, no stencils, no mess, no handwriting – the



only pens involved are used highlighting grammar and spelling errors during the proof reading before final printing. Issues are also available to read on the internet at [www.sonningcommonmagazine.org](http://www.sonningcommonmagazine.org) so even when you have moved away from our lovely village you can still read all about it! The magazine is full of colour now and each month has a different band of colour across the front cover.

The editorial team do try to make the material all relevant, interesting, useful and, hopefully, sometimes amusing – and it still takes time to pull it all together.

So if any of you reading this would like to offer an article, or some time to help, please send a message to [editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org](mailto:editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org). ■







# The power OF ADVERTISING

By JO STOVES

*Since its beginnings 40 years ago, Sonning Common magazine has been sustained and supported by its advertisers. During this time the divide between advertising and editorial space has been roughly 50:50 and the adverts have largely funded production costs; although grants from the Parish Council have been gratefully accepted.*

Delving through the magazine archives the advertisements tell their very own history of Sonning Common and its surrounding villages. Lloyds Pharmacy may recently have traded as Carsons but prior to that it was Hibberts, a shop Bradbeers Provisions in Baskerville Road was advertising as a "High Class Grocer" in the 1970's, Peppard Building Supplies and Garden Centre was then situated in Blounts Court Road and in the 1990's The Grouse and Claret at

Kingwood Common was still trading as a "characterful pub and restaurant".

Early adverts were simple. They were produced using a typewriter, the odd one or two were even handwritten, and were often for family run, local businesses. Some were very simply and to the point:- "Anne Devlin, Hair Stylist, 23b Wood Lane, Sonning Common, Kidmore End 3336" whilst others provided comprehensive lists of services. But, the advent of computers and desk top publishing changed all that. Although still produced in black and white, adverts boasted crisper text and included company logos and line drawings. More recently, the use of full colour has enabled the publication of the professional adverts we see in the magazine today.

Through all these changes to style, Peppard Building Supplies and Kidbys have loyally continued to advertise. They appeared in the first edition and they maintain their profile in the local area by continuing to advertise today. Among others, Heath and Watkins and the Fish and Chip Shop have also been regular advertisers over the years. Another interesting

observation is that in the early days the advertisers were small businesses and in more recent times, the predominance is towards sole traders.

Whilst working on this piece I spent some time with one of the stalwart supporters of village life, Judy Pitson. Judy joined the magazine committee in the '80s and was the Advertising Manager from 2005-2010. She said "I thoroughly enjoyed my time in advertising. I dealt with some very nice people and, sometimes we even had a waiting list for space". She also wished the magazine "every success for the future".

So, whether your adverts be large or small, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all past and present advertisers. Doubtlessly your businesses have benefitted from advertising and will continue to do so. Thank you for your support of the magazine; we certainly couldn't produce one without you. ■



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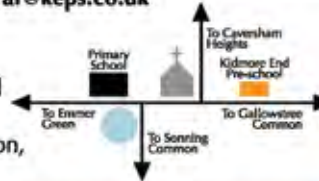
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# Sonning Common

## PARISH COUNCIL NEWS...

### From the Chairman of the Parish Council

Following the resignation of Linda Collison in August, the post of deputy parish clerk was advertised. We had an excellent response from eleven applicants, from whom we selected a shortlist. Three candidates were asked to complete a task and were then interviewed in some depth in early October. The appointment panel finally decided to offer the post to Mrs Ros Varnes and we are delighted that she has accepted.

Ros is well known in the village, particularly for her very effective leadership of the campaign to obtain the best possible provision for the library in the light of county council cuts. Her appointment will support and strengthen even further the work of the council. ■

**COUNCILLOR DOUGLAS KEDGE, CHAIRMAN SPC**

### Profile: Councillor Colin Reynolds

I decided to become a parish councillor, as I was approaching retirement, so that I could put more into the community.

I am now involved with the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) working party, the council's planning committee and the village's youth club committee.

It's a lot of work but it is very rewarding, particularly to be involved with helping to plan the long-term housing future of Sonning Common through the NDP.

One of the key issues I am focusing on is the provision of bus services for Sonning Common residents. I would like to see a better bus service to Henley as well as to Watlington, Wallingford and Oxford. ■



### £1 600 for FISH

The parish council was very pleased to agree a donation of £1 600 towards the new FISH bus, covering the cost of the tail lift for disabled and wheelchair passengers. Councillor Kedge said: "Councillors and residents much appreciate the very valuable, key contribution FISH makes to the life of our village." ■

### Community support from One-Stop

The parish council is extremely grateful for the One-Stop store's positive involvement in the life of our community.

One-Stop has donated £200 towards the skate park fund; raised an additional £100-plus for the skate park through counter collections; and made a generous donation of wine to the village's charity lunch, which raised £500 for the skate park and £110 for the Village Gardeners. ■



### News in Brief

#### Volunteers for the snow plan please

The parish council is resurrecting its snow plan for coping with the winter weather season. Last year a number of residents volunteered to help clear snow from key routes, which made a huge difference to the smooth running of the village. Volunteers who can provide access to heavy machinery, such as tractors, are particularly welcome. To join the snow plan team this year contact: Councillor Dirk Jones on 07764 407621.

#### Widmore Pond

The long-awaited sign detailing the history of Widmore Pond has been installed. It contains information on the history of the pond from the late 17th century onwards and includes specially-commissioned paintings by Kennylands Road resident Margaret Fieldhouse. Councillor Tom Fort said: "We hope very much that people will stop and take the time to learn more about this valuable community asset."

#### Skate park

More than £1,000 has been raised towards the skate park fund by a toy sale, the annual lunch and village quiz. All of the events took place in the village hall in September.

#### Grant for the Village Gardeners

The parish council has awarded a £750 grant to the Village Gardeners to help with their excellent work of brightening up the village environment.

#### CCTV cameras in place

The parish council has installed CCTV cameras to provide coverage of the car park behind the Co-operative store and the village hall area.

#### Disabled access

Oxfordshire County Council has lowered two sets of kerbs at either end of Lea Road to improve access for disabled people and those with pushchairs. ■

### New bus shelter

The parish council has persuaded Oxfordshire County Council to fund, supply and install a much-needed new bus shelter for the residents of Essex Way and Abbeycrest. ■



### CONTACTING THE PARISH COUNCIL

For all matters please contact Philip Collings, Parish Clerk on 0118 972 3616 or email [clerk@sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk)  
This page has been paid for by the Parish Council.



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# Library campaign IS A SUCCESS...

A professional librarian will be on hand to help people whenever Sonning Common Library is open. The library is open to the community for 25 hours a week and, exclusively to the primary school, for 10.5 hours per week.

When Oxfordshire County Council announced in December 2011 that it was halving the library's professional staff budget, it was feared there would be insufficient funding to pay for staff during all opening times.

However, the county council finally agreed to fund staff for an additional seven hours to help both the village and school communities.

Sonning Common Library will still have to cope with reduced staff from 31 March 2015. And the county council will be asking for local volunteers to support the library to help make up for this reduction in professional staff.

Ros Varnes, chair of the Friends of Sonning Common Library, said: "We are delighted that the county council has agreed some additional funding for our library. Ever since we received the good news that our library would not close after all, we have been campaigning to retain a professional staff member during all opening times.

"However, volunteers are still needed to support the library and its professional staff

in future. The Friends group plans to host a public meeting in early spring of next year so that residents can find out more from Oxfordshire County Council about helping in the library.

"The county council will provide training for volunteers and will run a three-month handover programme for volunteers and staff to work together."



# Wellies and Wristbands - GUIDE FESTIVAL

Heya, it's Maddie, Ingrid and Hannah, we are from 1st Peppard Guides. And we are going to talk to you about Wellies and Wristbands and why it is one of the best Guide camps we have ever been on (even though it is the only guide camp we have ever been to!). But anyway, it was really fun and we loved all the live Music, especially THREE TIMES OVER and GREENISH DAY!

We camped for 3 nights. Chiltern Edge Community Association gave us £400 to buy fab new tents - THANKYOU!! They were easy for us to put up and we were very cosy.

There were set activities including tree climbing, inflatables, crates and abseiling. When you are not doing your set activities, you can have foot rubs, nails painted, glitter tattoo or just "chillin'" in the hot tubs. Although when you get out you feel like a chilly bean (definitely freezing!). There was also a craft tent, cinema and "elements" section to light fires and chop wood.

Wellies and Wristbands provided the food and everything was really nice. They have different options if you are a veggie or have an allergy so you did not get poisoned or die. Every night you have either lemonade or coke ice lolly.



Once you are done eating you can either go straight to bed or change into your onesie and head down to the live music. There are chips, pancakes and yummy donuts to buy by the stage. So that is why we think Wellies and Wristbands is the best camp ever!


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# Brenda Rackstraw

*Those who knew her will remember her love of flowers and plants.*

Brenda was known to many people in Sonning Common, where she lived from 1996 until the summer of this year. After a short illness, she passed away peacefully at Sue Ryder Hospice, Nettlebed in September.

She devoted much of her professional life to working firstly as a reception teacher, and then as Head Teacher of a nursery school in High Wycombe. She and her husband, Jim, had a long and happy retirement – firstly in Fareham, fulfilling Jim's wish to be by the seaside, joining friends on caravan holidays and visiting

their first grandchildren. Later they moved to Sonning Common, closer to their two daughters and their families. Here happy days were spent with family and friends old and new, and here she supported Jim, whose health deteriorated in his later years, and here she lived an independent life after his death in 2005.

They will remember her dry wit and wisdom – the kind-hearted and sound advice given whenever anyone was low or had a problem.

Above all they will remember her kindness, her love of children and her enjoyment of the company of people from all walks of life. ■



# Church news

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## CHRISTMAS SERVICES

**All Saints' Church,  
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**Sunday 8 December**

6.30pm: An Advent Sequence of Readings and Music

**Christmas Eve**

5.30pm: Nativity Tableau

9pm: Holy Communion

**Christmas Day**

9am: Holy Communion

11am: Seven Lessons and Carols

**St Michael's Catholic Church,  
Peppard Road, Sonning Common**

**Sunday 8 December**

5.30 pm: Carol Concert of Christmas Music

**Christmas Eve - Tuesday 24 December**

6pm: Mass for families with children

8.30pm: Christmas Carols

9pm: "Midnight Mass"

**Christmas Day - Wednesday 25 December**

10.30am: Morning Mass

## CHRISTINGLE SERVICES

**Sunday 8 December**

4.30pm at St John the Baptist, KE

**Tuesday 24 December**

4.30pm at Christ the King, Sedgewell Rd, SC



*Proceeds of the collection raise money  
for the Children's Society.*

**Friday 20 December**

Candle-lit Carol Service, 7.30pm St John's

**Tuesday 24 December**

Midnight Eucharist, 11.30am St John's

**Wednesday 25 December**

Family Eucharist, 9.30am Christ the King

**Wednesday 25 December**

Family Eucharist, 10.30am St John's

## DROP IN

Drop-in from 2pm - 3.30pm at Christ the King Church, Sedgewell Road Thursday 19 December. All welcome. Need a lift? Jenny McGregor will be only too pleased to help you if you phone: 0118 9472855.

## LITTLE LAMBS

Little Lambs church group for under-fives. Wednesday 9.30am and 10.30am for a short service, messy activities and refreshments at St John's. Contact Felicity Cooper on 01189 472855 for further details.

## HENLEY CHOIRS' FESTIVAL

Henley Choirs' Festival takes place on Saturday January 25 2014. Vivaldi's Gloria, 7pm in St Mary's Church, Henley. Singers from both our churches will be taking part. Contact Frances Brewitt-Taylor on 01189 482743 or email francesbt@googlemail.com

*Merry Christmas and a Happy New year from all our churches! ■*



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# December 2013

MONDAY 2	FISH - Tesco Henley	
WEDNESDAY 4	Village Coffee Morning hosted by Sonning Common Women's Institute Open to all - Village Hall	10.30am - 12noon
WEDNESDAY 4	FISH - Reading Town Centre & Morrisons	
THURSDAY 5	FISH - M&S Superstore Camberley	
FRIDAY 6	Nottakwire dress rehearsal day - Village Hall	10am
SATURDAY 7	Nottakwire's Christmas event: Community Carols - Village Hall	5pm
SUNDAY 8	Carol concert - St Michael's RC church	5.30pm
MONDAY 9	FISH - Tesco Henley	
TUESDAY 10	FISH - Bicester Garden Centre	
WEDNESDAY 11	Santa's visit to Sonning Common - Through the village	7pm - 9pm
THURSDAY 12	Santa's visit to Sonning Common - Through the village	7pm - 9pm
THURSDAY 12	Sonning Common Women's Institute - Christmas party with Pandemonium - Village Hall	7.30pm
THURSDAY 12	FISH - Waddesdon Manor NT	
FRIDAY 13	Nottakwire end-of-term session - Village Hall	9.45am - 12noon
SATURDAY 14	South Chiltern Choral Society Concert - Chiltern Edge school	7.30pm
SUNDAY 15	South Chiltern Choral Society Concert - Chiltern Edge school	2pm
MONDAY 16	Sonning Common Parish Council - Village Hall	8pm
MONDAY 16	FISH - Tesco Henley	
MONDAY 16	FISH - London Christmas Lights p.m.	
TUESDAY 17	FISH - Oxford Christmas Market	
WEDNESDAY 18	FISH - Henley Farmers Market & Waitrose	
THURSDAY 19	FISH - Pub Lunch	
MONDAY 23	FISH - Tesco Henley	
WEDNESDAY 25	Christmas Day lunch - Village Hall	12noon
MONDAY 30	FISH - Tesco Henley	

# January 2014

WEDNESDAY 8	Nottakwire practice - Village Hall	9.45am - 11.15am
SUNDAY 12	Chiltern Edge Horticultural Society - "Growing Hardy Orchids" by Malcolm Brownword - Peppard War Memorial Hall	7.30pm
WEDNESDAY 15	Sonning Common Women's Institute - "First Responders" a talk by Chris Brook. Visitors welcome - Village Hall	7.30pm
THURSDAY 16	Notts group - Village Hall	9.30am - 12noon
SATURDAY 18	Sonning Common Parish Council - Village Hall	8pm
WEDNESDAY 22	Nottakwire practice - Village Hall	9.45am - 11.15am
WEDNESDAY 29	Notts group - Village Hall	9.30am - 12noon

The FISH Bus programme for January will be published on 20 December 2013. For more information and to book call 0118 972 3986. FISH runs regular shopping trips to Tesco in Henley and Henley and Reading town centres. Also monthly trips to a local Garden Centre and a Mystery Tea Tour. For more information and to book call 0118 972 3986. ■

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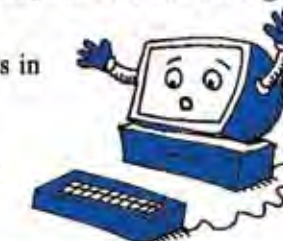


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